

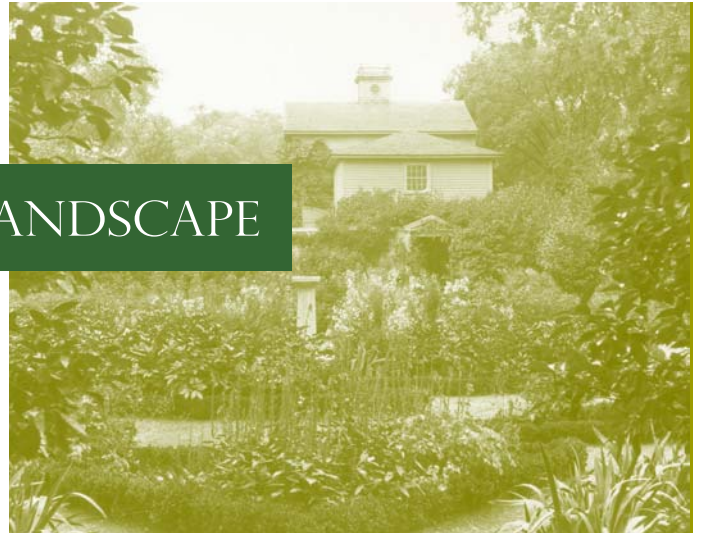
RECOVERY

of the

LONGFELLOW LANDSCAPE

*I have also planted some acorns and the oaks
grow for a thousand years, you may well
imagine a whole line of little Longfellows,
like the shadowy monarchs of Macbeth,
walking under the branches for countless
generations, 'to the crack of doom'
all blessing the men who planted the oaks.*

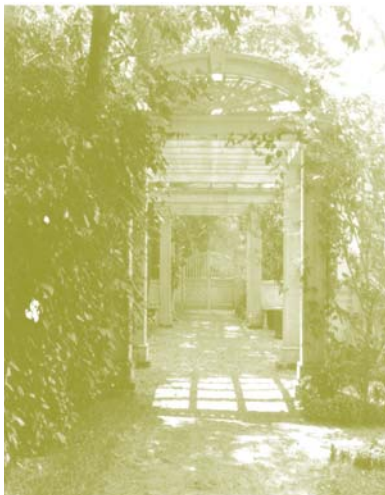
— H. W. Longfellow



LONGFELLOW GARDEN, POST 1905
Martha Hutcheson, Morris County Park Commission

LONGFELLOW NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE manages and interprets a historic landscape which has been loved and cultivated for over two centuries; however, as currently preserved, the gardens and other features represent a landscape in decline:

- The historic character of the landscape is diminished by age, disease, and the devastation of plant material.
- Many historic design features integral to the property – including a forecourt of elms and dramatic garden pergola – are either missing, deteriorated, or substantially reduced in size and scale.
- Today's landscape is spare and institutional in appearance compared with the profusely planted, overgrown, and romantic one that comforted and inspired the Longfellows and their many guests and friends.
- The appearance of the grounds today is inconsistent with the chosen rehabilitation period of Longfellow House and Carriage House. While the landscape retains an accumulation of features from many different historic periods, the overlay of more modern alterations diminishes it. Since no specific point in time is represented, the interpretive message conveyed to visitors is confusing and longterm preservation maintenance is difficult to achieve.



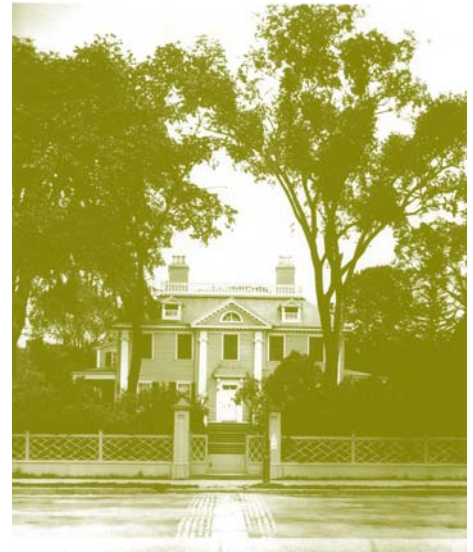
PERGOLA, POST 1905
Martha Hutcheson
Morris County Park Commission

RECOVERY OF THE HISTORIC LONGFELLOW LANDSCAPE by 2005 is a major program initiative of the National Park Service in concert with The Friends of the Longfellow House. This will enable Longfellow National Historic Site to consistently preserve and manage its primary cultural resources – landscape, buildings, and furnishings – and to accurately present these resources to the public as a unified whole.

Rehabilitation of the garden and grounds will reestablish the richness, profusion, and diversity of plant material and landscape features enjoyed by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow and his descendants. This treatment is technically possible, since most of the missing and important landscape features date to the early 20th century and are well-documented in plans and photographs. Finally, the historic framework of 1904-28 preserves the site's essential characteristics and integrity, including the contributions of Longfellow and daughter Alice, while retaining earlier features that signify the 200+ year history of this landmark property.

THE EXISTING 1.98 ACRE GARDEN SETTING for Longfellow House is significant as the core of a much larger c.1759 era estate whose prominent frontage on the Charles River so appealed to George Washington that he made it his headquarters in the early months of the Revolutionary War (1775-76). These historical associations later attracted poet Henry Wadsworth Longfellow to the site and provided an inspirational setting for his life and work (1837-82).

Conscientious preservation of the house and grounds began in earnest with Longfellow's residency and continued for more than a century after his death through the stewardship of his children. Longfellow's major interest focused on preserving the visual and historical link between the house and river and maintaining those features that "signified" the property and were integral to its identity such as the forecourt of elms. He also added refinements of his own, including an old fashioned flower garden behind the house in 1847.



*VASSALL-CRAIGIE-LONGFELLOW HOUSE, 1900
S.P.N.E.A.*

Daughter Alice carefully nurtured this association with the past through her efforts to establish the property as a memorial to her father and to Washington. Under her stewardship (1882-1928), the property achieved its greatest prominence as a work of landscape architecture and became a nationally known example of the Colonial Revival style – best exemplified in the formal garden designed by leading landscape architects Martha Brookes Hutcheson and Ellen Biddle Shipman.

MAJOR ELEMENTS OF THE PROJECT—

ARCHEOLOGY

- Archeological Overview & Assessment
- Intensive Surveys: Formal Garden and Brattle Street Forecourt
- Data Recovery

BRATTLE STREET FORECOURT

- Replace missing historic elms in forecourt and along Brattle Street with disease-resistant varieties
- Remove existing brick walk and re-establish historic width and surface material
- Remove roses on balustrade and replace with woodbine (Virginia creeper)
- Replace historic rose vines on Longfellow House pilasters and wisteria on east porch
- Replace wire mesh fence, keeping existing posts along east property line

HUTCHESON/SHIPMAN FORMAL GARDEN

- Replace missing pergola designed by Martha Brookes Hutcheson
- Replace missing garden beds in historic configuration
- Reclaim historic path configuration
- Replace missing herbaceous plants, bulbs, shrubs, vines and fruit trees based on historic plant lists
- Remove non-historic trees and other vegetation
- Rehabilitate vegetative screen along north property line
- Fabricate and install garden pots and missing bench based on historic design
- Re-align lattice fence in historic location and re-hang Hutcheson gate in line with pergola



*PERGOLA VIEW OF GARDEN AND HOUSE
Martha Hutcheson
Morris County Park Commission*

ADDITIONAL WORK

- In Alice's Garden, replace existing bluestone walk with grass; add perennial plantings; replace missing pipe arbor and climbing roses
- On East Lawn, relocate east walk to align with Hutcheson gate and pergola; replant vegetative screening of adjacent property; and widen oval walks at north side of east porch
- Reconfigure irrigation system, install exterior signage, and install exterior lighting for site security and program use.